

Remarks

Applicant has cancelled claims 1-27 and has added new claims 28-50. Consequently claims 28-50 are pending in this application. Each of the newly added claims is fully supported by the specification as originally filed.

Applicant acknowledges the Examiner's withdrawal of the Oath Declaration objection.

The Examiner rejected claims 1-27 either under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Rime, U.S. Publication No. 2002/0128919, or under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rime in view of Helot, US Publication No. 2002/0169675. Specifically the Examiner suggested that the applicant "more clearly articulate what is the disclosed invention" by taking measures to "[d]efine terms ... such as 'object', 'aspect of an order', 'relationship'", show "[w]hat is the purpose of establishing these relationships ... [and w]hat is the result, outcome or benefit that is derived ... in independent claims", and "recite the active steps in the method claims and structural elements required in the system claims".

In response, applicant has cancelled claims 1-27 and has drafted new claims 28-50 to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter, as fully supported by the disclosure of the original specification. More specifically independent claim 28 recites a method "for structuring an order based on input from an ordering user". This method includes the step of "creating a plurality of order-related objects". The order-related objects include "an object of a first type representing one or more units of one or more items ordered by the user", and "a plurality of objects of a second type representing different mechanisms to process a first aspect of the order required to complete ordering and delivering the ordered units". Claims 32-35 provide examples of the objects of a second type, including "different methods for shipping an ordered unit" (claim 32), "different destinations to which to ship an ordered unit" (claim 33), "different methods to pay for an ordered unit" (claim 34); and "different cost centers that can be assigned to an ordered unit" (claim 35).

The method of claim 28 further includes the steps of establishing two relationships, "a first relationship between the object of a first type and a first of the plurality of objects of a second type", and "a second relationship between the object of a first type and a second of the plurality of objects of a second type".

Claim 28 further provides that “the first relationship indicates that the first aspect of a first portion of the one or more units will be processed by the mechanism represented by the first of the plurality of objects of a second type,” and “the second relationship indicates that the first aspect of a second portion of the one or more units will be processed by the mechanism represented by the second of the plurality of objects of a second type”. Moreover, “the first portion is determined by a property of the first relationship as defined based on input from the user, independent of the object of a first type or the first of the plurality of objects of a second type,” and “the second portion is determined by a property of the second relationship as defined based on input from the user, independent of the object of a first type or the second of the plurality of objects of a second type.”

Claim 28 is fully supported by the original specification. For example the specification describes that “[i]n a typical example, parts of the order can be shipped to different locations and the buyer can pay for the order using multiple payment mechanisms. The order processing system provides the buyer with flexibility as to how to ship each item and how to pay and account for different parts of the order, such as the product costs for some or all of the items, or the shipping costs associated with various shipping methods.” (Paragraph [0005]). Further support for claim 28 can be found elsewhere in the specification, e.g. in paragraphs [0006] to [0008], figure 1, and the detailed description for figure 1.

Neither Rime nor Helot, nor a combination of Rime and Helot, teach the method of claim 28. Rime in general describes a workflow system for processing orders by a network of gateways, in which gateways are responsible for directing the workflow through the network based on conditions set against values of the fields in the order. In Rime, different gateways may process different fields. Rime does not teach the elements of claim 28. For example, Rime does not teach establishing two relationships, each of which indicates a mechanism for processing a portion of the ordered units, and such that each portion is determined by a property of that relationship defined based on input from the user, independent of the ordered items or the mechanism itself, as recited in the claim. Even if one interprets Rime’s Fig. 2 as indication of dividing the ordered units into two portions (board and bag), those portions and the relationships are pre-defined by the ordering system not based on input from the user, and they are dependent on the ordered items to include a bag and a board.

Helot does not teach that which is missing in Rime. Helot's application in general relates to an ordering system which assists the consumer to customize the ordered item by "separating the consumer item into ... base components and categories of available options. The base components and options categories are presented to a consumer through the user interface and the consumer selects the available choices." (Abstract) Helot's system is related for example to the order customization when buying a note book computer (FIG. 6-11) in which the consumer first selects a case, and subsequently other parts of the note book including its processor, screen, hard drive and CD-ROM. Helot does not teach using different mechanisms to process an order, relating those mechanisms to different portions of the order, the portions being determined by a property of the relationship based on input from the user.

All other newly added claims include the same or similar limitations as those of claim 28. In view of the above remarks, applicant believes that the pending claims are patentable over the prior art of the record.

In view of the above amendment and remarks, we believe that the pending application is in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully solicited.

Filed herewith is a request for continued examination. Please charge any fees not covered or any credits to Deposit Account No. 08-0219 to maintain the pendency of this application.

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Respectfully submitted,



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